



Equality Policy

Policy Statement

Scottish Golf (SG) endorses the principle of sports equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in Golf, whether as casual participants, team members, volunteers, coaches, office-bearers in clubs or those within SG:

- Has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, socioeconomic status or sexual orientation; and
- Can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

Legal obligations

SG is committed to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind in Golf in Scotland, and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero tolerance approach to harassment. Examples of the relevant legislation and the behaviours in question are given in the Appendix.

Positive action

The principle of Sports Equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate equally and fully.

SG will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to Golf in Scotland and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented in the sport or has difficulty accessing it.

Implementation

The following steps will be taken to publicise this policy and promote sports equality in Golf in Scotland:

- A copy of this document will be published on the SG Website.
- The SG CEO will take overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is observed.
- The Board will take full account of the policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of SG.
- SG will collaborate fully with any practical surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in Golf and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality in Golf in Scotland.
- SG will provide access to training for all of its Board Members to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities.
- SG will, through its partner in Coaching, The Professional Golfers' Association (PGA), encourage the inclusion of equality and inclusion training for all accredited and licensed coaches.
- SG will provide affiliated clubs with advice and guidance on matters relating to equality and will actively encourage clubs to operate membership policies compliant with relevant legislation (see Appendix).

Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy.

The Board will review all SG activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an annual basis, and will report formally on this issue via the Annual Report.

The Board, or where appropriate a designated project leader, will review any measures or initiatives that SG may institute or take part in to promote and enhance sports equality in Golf in Scotland.

The Board will review the policy itself at intervals of no more than three years (or when necessary due to changes in legislation).

Complaints and compliance

SG regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix as unacceptable, and is concerned to ensure that individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member or volunteer who violates the SG Equality and Diversity Policy.

Any person who believes that he or she has been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this policy should enact the SG Disciplinary Procedure.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND FORMS OF UNACCEPTABLE DISCRIMINATION

Legal rights

Discrimination has been legally defined through a series of legislative acts, including the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act 2006.

In April 2010, the Equality Act 2010 received Royal Assent. The Equality Act 2010 is a new law which harmonises where possible, and in some cases extends, protection from discrimination. It applies throughout the UK and came into force in October 2010.

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the 'protected characteristics'. Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as age (employment only until 2012), disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status (employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic¹. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

Discrimination arising from disability

When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation

It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.

¹ The exception to this is pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is only protected from discrimination on grounds of her own pregnancy.